

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

APRIL 2010

FOUR DOLLARS



Talking Turkey



Conservation Medicine



Art With An Edge



Bob Duncan Executive Director



During my years as a wildlife biologist, I was often called upon to weigh-in for or against a specific wildlife management strategy under consideration—usually in response to a trend we were observing in the field, or new developments affecting a particular species. Making solid, informed decisions on issues such as disease prevention was a challenging part of my job.

Today, biologists and other wildlife and fisheries professionals are routinely called upon during such decisions; if anything, wildlife management has become more complex. A number of factors contribute to this complexity, but essentially it is a result of heightened interactions between people and wild animals.

The global transport of goods, plants, and animals has accelerated threats to wildlife. Outbreaks of disease among fishes, birds, mammals, and amphibians often catch the attention of the press, and the finding of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) this past winter in a white-tailed deer in western Virginia was no exception. And, yes, CWD is a serious disease. It is a disease that has been faced by western states for decades and one for which our staff have been preparing for many years.

The good news here is that we have learned a great deal from other states, and we are responding with a well developed plan that includes actively monitoring for

CWD. Our primary management objective is to minimize risk of the disease spreading within the population by focusing our work geographically. As such, five years ago our Department made the decision to limit the transport of whole deer carcasses from

states with CWD into Virginia.

We will continue to deal with challenges such as CWD as we always have—through thoughtful, deliberate debate and policy development. And while such policy decisions are not always met with enthusiasm by our constituents and the public at large, I can assure you that they are made with one underlying principle in mind: that is, to put the good of the overall resource ahead of the good of an individual animal. That principle has guided wildlife management over the decades. It is a principle that comes into play more and more as humans bump up against wild animals and their habitats.

So, I'd like to tip my hat to our dedicated staff of wildlife and fisheries professionals whose expertise and judgment are regularly called upon both in the field and in the board room. Their dedication to their work cannot be measured by hours put in or paperwork completed, but rather, by the tough decisions they make each and every week to safeguard the health and vitality of wild animals across Virginia.

Mission Statement

To manage Virginia's wildlife and inland fish to maintain optimum populations of all species to serve the needs of the Commonwealth; To provide opportunity for all to enjoy wildlife, inland fish, boating and related outdoor recreation and to work diligently to safeguard the rights of the people to hunt, fish and harvest game as provided for in the Constitution of Virginia; To promote safety for persons and property in connection with boating, hunting and fishing; To provide educational outreach programs and materials that foster an awareness of and appreciation for Virginia's fish and wildlife resources, their habitats, and hunting, fishing, and boating opportunities.

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About the cover:

For three decades hunters have taken to Virginia woods to test their skill at harvesting a spring gobbler. Their chances of success are much improved, thanks to a long-running management effort aimed at boosting turkey populations statewide. See related story on page 8. ©Dwight Dyke

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ART WITH AN EDGE

©Dwight Dyke



©Trischa Jones

by Clarke C. Jones.

There are some chance meetings that stay with you forever, and Edmund could not shake the childhood impression of the knives he saw as a teenager and his desire to make them.

The staccato grumble of a '93 Harley FLHS echoes down the Blue Ridge Mountains along the Augusta-Rockbridge county border. We hear his arrival long before we see him. Photographer Dwight Dyke and I are waiting in the driveway in front of the home of internationally known, integral knife maker Edmund Davidson. The home is an old, white clapboard house built in 1886 by Edmund's great-grandfather and is the only home Davidson has ever known.

The tall, angular Davidson pulls into the driveway. He drops the kickstand of the bike and strides over to greet us. With mustache and long ponytail, he looks like he might have

walked off the set of *Easy Rider* or *The Wild One*. The fact that there is a handgun for protection tucked into his belt adds to the effect. I thought I was in this remote part of Virginia for an interview and a few pictures: It is not every day your subject is packing heat.

If you have yet to learn to not judge a book by its cover, you will discover something about Edmund and yourself if he invites you into his home. There in his living room sits a third-hand, Kawai piano. It is not the home furnishing that comes to mind when entering the late 19th-century farmhouse that huddles close to Route 42 near the hamlet of Goshen. If you ask Edmund if he plays the



©Dwight Dyke

MEET KNIFE MAKER EDMUND DAVIDSON OF GOSHEN.

piano, shyly he will admit he does. He may tell you that although he took piano lessons for five years as a child, he was “hopeless.” Try not to stand opened mouthed as I did, expecting some broken down rendition of *Rocky Top* and instead hear the melodic notes of the *Sonata Quasi Una Fantasia Opus 27* by Beethoven. If you prefer to hear the *Love Theme from Romeo and Juliet* by Nino Rota, as arranged by Henry Mancini, he can play that too. One of the first things you learn about Edmund Davidson is that he is far from one dimensional.

Knife making was an unknown craft to me and, frankly, I did not see anything special about making a knife until I learned what a full-integral knife was. Simply put—but very difficult to make—it is a knife made out of a block of a solid piece of steel. There are no solder joints or gaps. The blade, guard, handle tang, and butt cap are all cut out of the same piece of steel. The only thing which is not steel would be the handle inlays.

“I saw my first real custom knives when my family rented our house to a group of hunters. Two of them had



©Dwight Dyke

Here, Edmund Davidson operates a vertical milling machine used to make heavy cuts. Above, Intricate engraving adorns the blade and handle sections of the finished knife (p. 4). This Sub-Hilt Clip Point Fighter knife featuring a scrimshaw handle is a family gift to Richard Petty.

Bob Loveless knives. Bob Loveless is considered one of the world’s most innovative knife makers and a true pioneer in that art form,” relates the

55-year-old Davidson. “I was 14 when I saw these knives and they made an impression on me. However, back then, I didn’t want to be a



©Dwight Dyke

Davidson uses a large band saw to cut steel for the making of two knives.

knife maker. I wanted to be an over-the-road truck driver—and I became one. I traveled over a million miles on the road without an accident. But I found it to be a brutal way to make a living.”

There are some chance meetings that stay with you forever, and Edmund could not shake the childhood impression of the knives he saw as a teenager and his desire to make them. “In 1982, I had what you might call an ‘epiphany’ about knife making. I studied for four years, learning to be a self-taught machinist, not really knowing what to do or how to do it, but I was driven to make knives. It was much more difficult than I imagined,” says Edmund.

Following one’s dream can be an extremely difficult journey and often there are few who believe you have taken the right path. “There were so many people who thought I would fail,” he reveals.

There are over 50 important steps that have to be taken when Edmund makes an integral knife. A mistake in any one of these steps could result in an expensive correction or having to start the whole knife making process over again.

“There are several individual setups involving the actual machining of the steel bar that are most critical,”

says Davidson. “That is because the cuts have to be accurate so the end results are near perfect. The hollow grinding has to be perfect because this is the whole knife that I am working on and not parts that are added later, such as a guard or butt cap.”

Edmund uses two different milling machines. One is a Cincinnati Vertical Milling machine built in 1942. It was sort of an impulsive purchase. “I bought it in 2004 but couldn’t take delivery of the thing until 2006—because I didn’t have a place to put it.” Davidson also purchased a Sharpe Vertical Turret Milling machine. One machine is used to square some of the steel bars and do heavy cutting and the other has a digital read-out (but all the work is done manually) and is used to trim and square handle materials. Handle material can vary from exotic or stabilized woods, to industrial synthetics, or to all legal ivory or horn.

“I didn’t know much about either of the machines other than that I needed them to make a quality knife,” he says. These machines may help in knife making but most of Edmund’s creations require extensive handwork.

“Another part of the process,” explains Edmund, “is personally file fitting most of the handle inlays. This is

critical to a good fit and final finish. However, when hand rubbing the finish onto the blade, it is very easy to get stuck by the point of the blade and edges. When flat filing a traditional Bowie Blade, I file to the edge so it is sharp when it goes to be heat-treated, so preparing this style of blade is extremely dangerous. Most every object or tool I work with can eat skin at the speed of light, so safety is paramount!”

It should also be noted that Davidson does not use CNC (automated machinery) or lasers on knives that are represented as being handmade. On many of Davidson’s knives it can truly be said that they are created by blood, sweat, and maybe a few tears.

From his small shop, Davidson sells his knives all over the world, and his international reputation is built upon quality workmanship and his creativity. He expects no less from the engravers and other artisans whose work may become part of his knives. If his knives are to have legacy (legal) ivory handle, Edmund sends his knives to Texas, where scrimshander Linda Kurst Stone of Kerrville performs all of Davidson’s scrimshaw work. It may take Linda anywhere from 8 to 15 hours to produce handles for Edmund’s knives. Scrimshaw work can be very detailed, depending on



©Terrill Hoffman

Richard Petty (C) enjoys a moment with daughter Lisa and son-in-law Charles Luck IV, president of Luck Stone.



Davidson finishes filing work on an integral knife prior to sanding.

what the customer desires. The scrimshaw work alone on the handle of a knife made by Davidson, which was presented recently to Richard Petty as a gift from son-in-law Charles and daughter Lisa Luck of Goochland, took 60 hours.

Linda and Edmund have been collaborating since the late 1980s. She has high praise for his work. "There are not many knife makers who choose the more time-consuming method that is required to make an integral knife. I think it shows he is willing to invest his time for a quality piece with the integrity that has been consistent in his knife making," says Stone.

Engraving on the blade or other parts of a Davidson knife is the work of nationally recognized engraver Jere Davidson (no relation) of Rustburg. The engraving can make a valuable handmade knife more valuable or if poorly done, will make a knife far less valuable. Jere has been a long-standing member of what Edmund calls his "team" that helps create his custom knives.

"Jere is the only person I trust when it comes to having one of my knives engraved. We have worked together for years and he is extremely creative. Every engraving Jere does for me is different," says Edmund.

After Jere has completed his artistic engraving to a knife, Edmund will have the knife sent to Brad Stallsmith of Peters' Heat Treating, Inc. in Meadville, Pennsylvania. According to Stallsmith, "Heat treating a knife increases the toughness, hardness, corrosion resistance, and edge holding. It involves heating the knife to a specific elevated temperature for a given amount of time, followed by rapid cooling, then a cryogenic treatment, and finally reheating to a lower temperature. Grain structure is transformed, resulting in a blade that will not bend or break and will hold a sharp edge."

Asked whether there is any additional pressure when knowing you are working on a knife that will be going to someone like Richard Petty, Brad responds, "Most raw blades that I heat treat have a maximum value of a few hundred dollars as I get them. Edmund's blades are valued at several thousands of dollars. Richard Petty's knife presented a bigger challenge because of the work that had already gone into making it prior to heat treating. This adds great value to the blade, thus increasing the need to handle everything correctly and to get it right the first time."

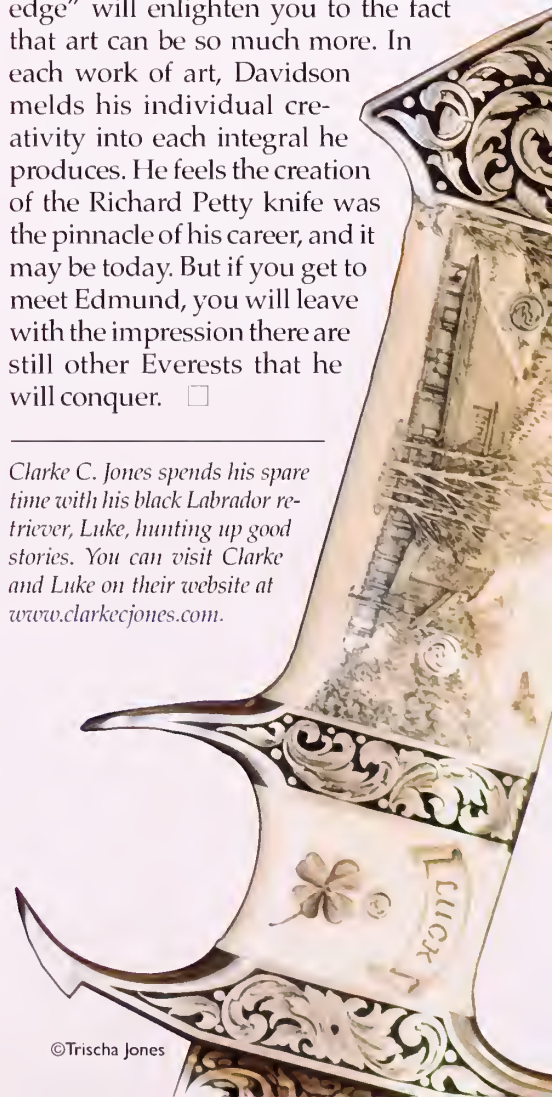
Perhaps the best place to see the artistic works of Edmund Davidson

and his team is in Dr. David Darom's beautiful book, *Edmund Davidson, The Art of the Integral Knife*. Dr. Darom, former head of the Department of Scientific Photography at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, to date has compiled a series of four art books dedicated to modern custom knives. The Davidson book not only details how an integral knife is made, it shows in vivid color why Edmund's knives are a favorite of collectors in Virginia and around the world.

If you only looked at art as a painting or a sculpture, you have limited yourself as to what art can truly be. Despite being a one-man operation, Davidson believes he has been led to this art form by greater hands than his, saying, "I could never have chosen another occupation that has been as rewarding as knife making. It has introduced me to a world, and to very special people, I would never have met otherwise."

Edmund Davidson's "art with an edge" will enlighten you to the fact that art can be so much more. In each work of art, Davidson melds his individual creativity into each integral he produces. He feels the creation of the Richard Petty knife was the pinnacle of his career, and it may be today. But if you get to meet Edmund, you will leave with the impression there are still other Everests that he will conquer. □

Clarke C. Jones spends his spare time with his black Labrador retriever, Luke, hunting up good stories. You can visit Clarke and Luke on their website at www.clarkecjones.com.



'Tis the Season

*Spring turkey hunting in Virginia
has never been better.*



by Virginia Shepherd

It's been nearly 50 years since Virginia opened its first spring gobbler season. In 1962, hunters headed out into the spring woods for the first time. In the quiet of the predawn darkness with wooden Lynch box calls in their pockets, they set up with their backs against big oak trees and waited for the show to begin.

It is always a show you have to wait for. Every turkey hunter knows that. In the predawn, hands stiff with the cold and ground hard on the backside, it seems the darkness will never lift. Even as the outlines of trees become more visible with each blink of the eye, it's still a black-and-white world when that first crow sounds off and the hunter makes that first ever-so-careful scrape of a yelp across a call.

A gobbler's rapid-fire reply seems to wake the world with a shout, a thrill, a full-throated drum roll. There really is nothing like it. By the time you leave the woods at noon, the breezy, warm intoxication of another Virginia springtime is in full swing, abuzz with colors and sounds and movement, and you realize you've been a privileged participant in something extraordinary. You were there, smack-dab in the middle of it all, with or without a turkey in the bag. Thank God for wild turkeys! They've put you back in the woods at sunrise—exactly where you need to be.

It is always a show you have to wait for.

It is easy to forget the monumental effort it took to re-establish the wild turkey not only in Virginia, but throughout the entire country. By 1920, the wild turkey had been lost from all but 18 out of the 39 states in its original range. In Virginia, wild turkeys disappeared from nearly two-thirds of the counties in the state.



©Dwight Dyke

What Do You See Out There?

Spring turkey hunters see more than strutting gobblers when they're sitting for hours with their backs up against a tree on a fine spring morning. They've seen bears, coyotes, foxes, and bobcats as well. Here are a few of the "bonus" experiences our cooperators have told us about while turkey hunting:

- ◆ A red fox ran by close enough to touch
- ◆ Saw box turtles mating
- ◆ Saw a bear and 3 cubs spook a turkey
- ◆ Saw a gobbler with 4 beards
- ◆ Saw a hen strut
- ◆ Called in a coyote
- ◆ Called in a bobcat
- ◆ Saw a turkey gobble at a coyote
- ◆ Found a turkey nest with 10 eggs
- ◆ Saw a young bald eagle swoop down on a shot turkey

Old-timers remember the dismal (and expensive) failures of stocking pen-raised birds in the 1920s and '30s that drove financially strapped wildlife agencies to despair. It was only in the 1940s, when research dollars became available as a result of the passage of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (Pittman-Robertson) Act of 1937 (combining a federal excise tax on sporting guns and ammunition with hunter license fees to fund state wildlife management efforts), that wildlife managers could get down to scratch and work on figuring out how to get wild turkeys back into our forests.

Still, it took decades. Why? Because intuitive methods didn't work.

Pen-raised birds repeatedly proved susceptible to predation and typically failed to survive until spring. It was not until Virginia's own Dr. Henry S. Mosby, a wildlife management professor at Virginia Tech, successfully demonstrated that a rocket-cannon netting device used for capturing waterfowl could be effectively used to trap and relocate native birds that hopes began to rise that turkeys would once again skim the treetops across the Old Dominion.

The trapping and relocation of wild turkeys back into their historical habitat proved an astonishing success. In Virginia, turkey populations were established in every county from

continued on pg. 11



Here's What Virginia Hunters Have to Say...

DGIF conducts a yearly survey of more than 300 spring gobbler hunters across the state who collectively clock in a total of more than 12,000 hours of hunting. These surveys provide information about each hunting season, wild turkey habits, and hunting experiences. Survey highlights below should prove of interest to seasoned and not-so-seasoned spring turkey hunters. (For a closer look at the complete survey results, go to www.HuntFishVA.com.)

Improving Your Spring Hunting Success

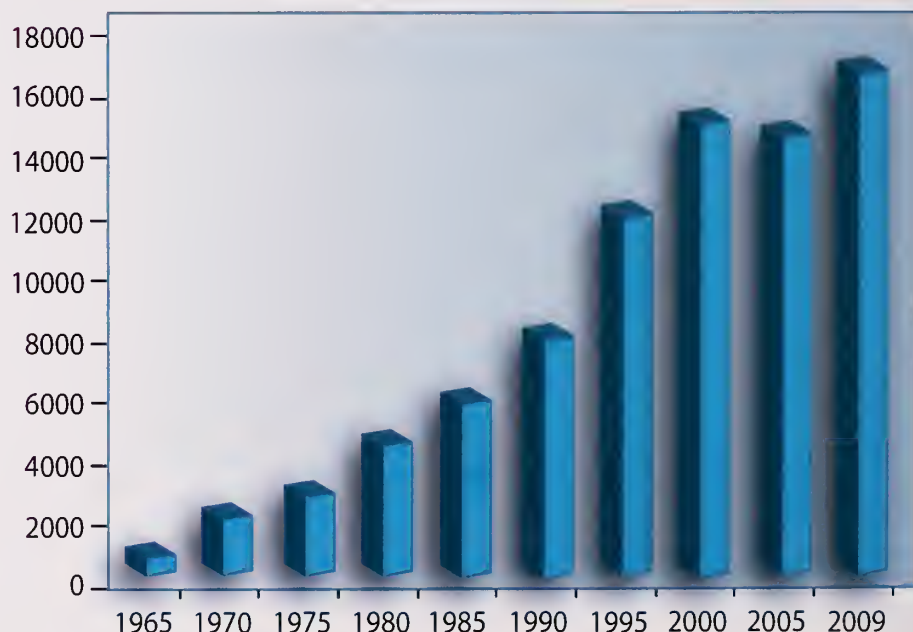
- Don't press that snooze button on your alarm clock. More than half the birds harvested in the spring are taken by 8 a.m. More than 80% are taken before 10 a.m.
- Make sure you hit the woods during opening week. Daily harvest rates are greatest during the first few days of the season. The numbers decline steadily over the second and third weeks, then pick up again during the last two weeks.
- Your best chance at striking up a conversation with a gobbler is during the first week of the season when gobbling rates peak.
- Generally speaking, gobblers are early morning talkers. Gobbling rates in the morning were more than twice that heard after noon.

- Overall, hunters have the best success rate hunting in hardwood forests.
- Spring turkey hunters have on average a 25% success rate. So, don't expect to bag a bird every year. Just appreciate the opportunity to be in the woods earning the right to take one of Virginia's gobblers.
- Spring turkey hunters prefer copper-coated shot. Heavi-shot comes in second (and is steadily increasing). Lead shot follows up in third place.
- 30 yards is the shotgun Golden Rule for a successful shot. The average mean killing distance reported is 29 yards. The average distance for missed shots is 37 yards.
- 50 yards is the rifle Golden Rule for a successful shot. The average killing shot by rifle hunters was 51 yards. The average distance for a missed bird was 76 yards.

Hot Topics

- ✦ Hunter safety is the #1 priority for spring turkey hunters, prompting an ongoing discussion concerning the use of rifles for turkey hunting. However, changing the regulation to shotgun-only is not within the purview of DGIF. It requires legislative action by the General Assembly, which is a bigger and more complicated procedure than most hunters might think.
- ✦ The coyote controversy. According to Gary Norman, radio telemetry studies on coyotes show limited evidence of direct predation on wild turkeys. Plus, the rise in coyote populations does not correlate with decreases in wild turkeys. So, while we're still trying to nail down the effects of increasing coyote populations on native wildlife, it appears that turkey populations are not suffering from this new dynamic edging its way into our ecosystem.

Spring Gobbler Harvest





Dwight Dyke

Trapping turkeys for relocation within the state was key to management efforts of the past.

which they had been lost. The ever adaptable bird appeared able to thrive in nearly every environment. In fact, wild turkey populations today occupy more square miles of habitat in the entire U.S. than any other game bird.

So here we are, beginning a new decade in a new century, and turkey populations in Virginia have never been higher. At an estimated 165,000 birds, Virginia ranks in the top tier of mid-Atlantic states in wild turkey populations. The number of spring turkey hunters in Virginia has increased as well, from 43,000 in 1993 to nearly 70,000 today. Hunters are experiencing an average 25% success rate, a 51% satisfaction rate, and last year's harvest jumped 10% from the year before with a nearly record harvest of 16,611 birds. Without a doubt, wild turkey restoration is one of Virginia's premier wildlife management success stories. Now, can anything be done to make sure we keep it that way?

You betcha.

Gary Norman, the Department's wild turkey project leader, is closely watching a phenomenon in Virginia which has occurred in other states with high turkey populations. "After years of increasing rates of productivity, turkey numbers appear to reach a plateau. Productivity then begins to fluctuate from year to year, rising and falling at intervals. Some regions of our state may have reached that threshold density." Norman is observing productivity fluctuations in many parts of Virginia.

"From a management perspective, we're very watchful," he says. "But on the flip side, I'm not sure we could be doing better population-wise on a statewide basis."

A key objective of DCIF's turkey management program is to bring uniformity to turkey populations in the state by improving numbers in

regions with low and declining populations through the sensitive manipulation of hunting seasons and habitat management. Another top management priority is the promotion of fall turkey hunting, which has been waning over the past ten years.

Putting it all together, DGIF is developing a new, wild turkey management plan this year, designed to utilize 50 years' worth of research on this kind of game birds. We've helped turkeys make it back into our woods. And with the help of Virginia's turkey hunters, we're determined to keep it that way. □

Virginia Shepherd is a former editor of Virginia Wildlife magazine. She has been a freelance writer for the past 13 years.

Want to Participate?

If you're a spring turkey hunter, we'd love to have your input on your hunting experiences this season. Go to www.HuntFishVA.com and sign up for the Spring Gobbler Hunting Survey.

Be Careful Out There

1. Don't wear any clothing with red, white, or blue colors. These are found on a gobbler's head and should be avoided.
2. Never stalk a gobbling bird. Another hunter could also be hunting the same bird and misidentify you as a gobbler.
3. If a hunter does approach you, do not wave or motion to them. It is better to yell out that you're a hunter. Waving to a hunter could mimic the movement of a gobbler and lead to trouble.
4. Pick a large tree to set up to call from. This will serve to protect you from hunters who could be stalking you from behind.



CONSERVATION

HUMAN HEALTH... WILDLIFE HEALTH... ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

story and photos
by Marie Majarov

In the early 1800s, renowned evolutionary biologist Charles Darwin began his remarkable life's work as a medical student, which in his era routinely integrated extensive study of natural history and zoology with medical training. The richness of these collective studies inspired Darwin to undertake his famous journey aboard the *HMS Beagle* to explore the relatively pristine natural world of that time and eventually pen his seminal work, *On the Origin of Species*. This intimate connection of natural history and medicine, so critical to Darwin and health

practitioners of his time, has been largely lost in today's world of intellectual specialization and exponentially increasing masses of knowledge and technology.

Our natural world, too, is little like the world Darwin observed; hardly could it be called pristine. The footprints of man's actions have taken a heavy toll. An upsurge in new and re-emerging human and animal infectious diseases; non-infectious diseases; environmental health problems that are related to habitat loss and degradation; climate change; chemical pollutants; and the distressing demise of many species is being recorded. Headlines about Swine Flu, Avian Influenza, Lyme

Disease, and various cancers have become all too frequent. We are at ever-increasing risk if the natural order of ecological processes continues to be undermined. It is therefore urgent that we renew the essential link between medicine and natural history in order to live in a more healthful manner and achieve a sustainable future that protects, not squanders, precious and limited resources.

This is the goal of conservation medicine: reconnecting natural history with medical science in order to find practical solutions to the environmental challenges and health issues of our time. In our modern era of information and technology, such a



VCU's Walter L. Rice Education Building. The LEEDS Platinum Green Certified Education building dedicated to the memory of Ambassador Walter L. Rice. Left, a breathtaking view of original streambeds and new grasses emerging in the drained impoundment once referred to as Lake Charles, now being returned to its natural state.

MEDICINE



Dr. Jay Wore, Director of the Conservation Medicine Program at the VCU Walter and Inger Rice Center for Environmental Life Science, examines a box turtle. Reptiles are major bioindicators for many potential human and environmental health risks.

monumental endeavor requires the active collaboration of many minds—medical scientists, biologists, pathologists, ecologists, epidemiologists, statisticians, veterinarians, chemists, citizen scientists, and even economists and social scientists thinking outside the specialization box.

Virginia is exceptionally fortunate to have this kind of cutting-edge collaboration actively underway. A newly established Conservation Medicine Program at the Walter and Inger Rice Center for Environmental Life Sciences of Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), one of only a few such endeavors in the United States and worldwide, is rapidly developing under the direction of Joy Ware, Ph.D., professor of pathology, affiliate professor of biology, and nationally recognized cancer researcher, with indispensa-



DGIF biologist/herpetologist J.D. Kleopfer demonstrates how radio telemetry equipment is used in locating turtles fitted with radio transmitters.



Dr. Daryl Petersen, a VCU Biochemist, is working to isolate a hepadnavirus to be used in developing important human disease vaccines.

ble support and involvement from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) and a growing number of other partner institutions.

In the words of Dr. Ware, "Conservation medicine is the study of the intersection of wildlife health, human health, and environmental health. Health interconnects all species," she



One of the tree frogs found at the Rice Center.



*Fowler's toad, *Bufo fowleri*, is one of the amphibian species found at the Rice Ctr.*

land and water, are exceptionally sensitive to environmental conditions and therefore act as critical bioindicators for many potential human and environmental health risks. Monitoring disease and malformations in various frogs, toads, snakes, salamanders, and turtles is central to Dr. Ware's research efforts. A partnership with DGIF biologist and herpetologist John D. Kleopfer "makes this program of amphibian and reptile research possible at this university," states Dr. Ware. The relationship is marked by technical support and what Kleopfer calls "synergism," from which creative ideas and insights flow. It exemplifies the practice of conservation medicine.



Box turtles serve an important role as bioindicators of environmental health. This turtle was a healthy specimen and said "aaah" quite willingly!



Dr. Ware and graduate student Nicolas Frederick swab an eastern box turtle for samples to monitor its health.

emphasizes. "Our focus is to study the ecological backdrop to disease and to achieve solutions that will make a real difference."

**AMPHIBIANS,
REPTILES, AND BIOINDICATORS**
Amphibians and reptiles, with their permeable skin and exposure to both

Blood and tissue samples, collected with the utmost care to protect each species and the balance of nature from any inadvertent spread of pathogens, are processed and catalogued by Dr. Ware and hardworking graduate students. The health monitoring data that have been collected so far look good for species in

and around the Rice Center property, but both Ware and Kleopfer caution that people underestimate both the importance of bioindicators and the necessity to replicate studies to insure that real trends, not just isolated occurrences, are properly understood.

Box turtle populations present another special concern for researchers. Frequently killed or displaced by urban development, these long-living reptiles don't usually survive when relocated. Twenty captive-bred young turtles whose parents were rescued from a proposed shopping center serve as the core participants of a major, innovative 'head starting' project. Ten turtles were penned in an appropriate habitat on the Rice Center property; the other ten, simply released. With the use of radio telemetry, it was found that penning the turtles significantly reduced the turtle's movement patterns and subsequently improved their survival. This research will hopefully provide wildlife managers with a tool to address the troubling decline of box turtles throughout their range.

Amphibians and reptiles also star in outreach efforts to educate future stewards of environmental health in

the principles of conservation medicine, a goal of all associated with the program. Ann Wright, VCU Life Sciences outreach education coordinator works closely with DGIF's Master Naturalist program and uses exploration of vernal pools rich with spotted salamanders to introduce concepts of environmental health to area school children. And box turtles are the favored "charismatic" choice of reptiles for Kleopfer, whose outreach efforts will be featured in an upcoming issue of this magazine.

PRESERVING HABITAT AND BIODIVERSITY

Land use, habitat fragmentation, and biodiversity are central concepts

species populations. Some will be lost forever and others will increase disproportionately. Consider, for example, our fractured woodlands with prolific numbers of white-tailed deer and white-footed mice which carry Lyme disease.

Maintaining habitat and species biodiversity has been linked with a decrease in infectious diseases. To demonstrate this principle: the American robin is what is termed a competent host (a fertile place for West Nile, the virus, to thrive) and a major food source for hungry mosquitoes. When mosquitoes have a more diverse choice of birds upon which to feed—many being incompetent hosts—fewer mosquitoes be-



Dr. Joy Ware and DGIF's J.D. Kleopfer use telemetry equipment to locate turtles in the pen of the Head Starting project.



Dr. Ware holds an eastern box turtle fitted with a radio transmitter that enables easy locating for monitoring.

within conservation medicine. Extinction of species and loss of diversity have devastatingly destructive effects on ecosystem functions and we must appreciate the risk this creates to our health, our children, and our world. Roads and development encroach upon and diminish critical habitat, leading to profound and frequently irreversible changes in

come infected and the incidence of West Nile virus declines significantly in birds as well as in humans. In this regard, Rice Center investigators have extensive programs of monitoring the health characteristics and migration patterns of avian populations, as well as clever testing on the contents of mosquito stomachs to assess what birds they have feasted

upon and evaluate infection types and levels carried by those birds.

As we lose plant and animal species, we also lose inherent possibilities to understand varied biological and ecological problems. Many bear species are threatened; understanding their fat metabolism could offer insight into obesity. Sharks have unrivaled immune systems but are endangered by slaughter for cartilage and soup. Drugs based on chemicals found in nature, like *Taxol*, an effective agent used to treat breast cancer, came from the Pacific Yew tree that was once considered a trash tree and routinely discarded. Think what else is being discarded!

The Rice Center location is exceedingly advantageous to this work. Its 343 magnificent acres fronting on the James River are in close proximity to DGIF's Chickahominy Wildlife Management Area (WMA); they host the DGIF Region 1 headquarters; and they are adjacent to Presquile Island, James River, and Plum Tree Island national wildlife refuges overseen by Cyrus Brame of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, another active member of the partnership who aggressively works on



Mosquito Trap developed by Biostatistician, Dr. Kevin A. Caillouët to collect mosquitoes so they can be assessed for what birds they have feasted on and the diseases that might be involved.
©Emily Sheldon, VCU Biostatistics graduate student.



The silver button pasted to the box door is a temperature recording i-button that was used to record temperature at 1-minute intervals in order to determine if the presence of the trap affected the bird's behavior. Here, it is being used with prothonotary warblers.
©Emily Sheldon, VCU Biostatistics graduate student.

Resources:

Conservation Medicine: Ecological Health in Practice, by A. Alonzo Aguirre, Richard S. Ostfeld, Gary M. Tabor, Carol House, and Mary C. Pearl. Published by Oxford University Press, Inc., 2002.

The Conservation Medicine Program at VCU:

www.vcu.edu/rice/research/research-conservation.html

www.pathology.vcu.edu/research/Conservation_Medicine/index.html

Diversity of Birds Buffer Against West Nile Virus. Science Daily.

www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/02/090220191318.htm

Biodiversity Loss is a 'Wake-Up' Call, Warns UN. Richard Black.

<http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2010/01/11-0>

many fronts—particularly habitat management practices to control invasive species.

Together these properties form over 11,000 acres of protected habitat where collaborators can monitor, study, and guard many native species while preserving, and in some instances even restoring, the habitat to its natural state. The DGIF and VCU have both erected LEEDS-certified green buildings on the Rice property that take into consideration least disturbance to the environment, energy savings, water efficiency, and indoor-outdoor environmental quality. The structures beautifully demonstrate how to work within our natural environment.

The work of 150 DGIF wildlife and fisheries professionals further supports preservation of habitat and biodiversity so critical to conservation medicine across the commonwealth. This work occurs in 36 additional WMAs, numerous public locations, programs with individual landowners, and special projects—including new research into waterfowl diseases, species population management, a Wildlife Action Plan identifying over 900 species of need, efforts to eradicate invasive species, and efforts to fight ruinous wildlife diseases like White-Nose Syndrome in bats, Chronic Wasting Disease in deer, and Chytrid Fungus in amphibians.

Wildlife Resources Bureau Director David Whitehurst sums it up: "VCU's Conservation Medicine Program affords all collaborating partners an extraordinary opportunity to come together in an innovative, interdisciplinary manner to make significant contributions to our health and that of our environment. The efforts of these ecological caregivers are truly something special."

Darwin would applaud, "This is the right direction!" □

Marie and Milan Majarov (www.majarov.com) are clinical psychologists, nature enthusiasts, and members of the Virginia Outdoor Writers Association who live in Winchester.



Wild About Morels

*While appreciating the
spring woods, you
just might stumble across
a gourmet delight.*

by Cristina Santiestevan

I found my first morel by accident. Well, that's not entirely true. I had been looking for weeks; trudging through the chilly pre-spring forest, wearing out my eyes and jumping every time I spotted a walnut shell among the mess of last fall's leaves. Finally, in mid-April, I looked up from tying my shoelace and there was my first morel.

Such a surprise appearance is pretty typical for these elusive forest mushrooms. "They just sort of appear when they feel like appearing," explains Amy Goins, an experienced forager who offered some tips before my first forays. What Goins means is that morels are found on their own terms, and only when they are ready to be found. As if the mushrooms have a say in the matter.

Talking with Goins over the phone, I thought this attitude was a little strange. After just one season of morel hunting, I've changed my mind. The mushrooms are definitely in charge.

If you have never spotted a morel, there is good reason for that. These mushrooms are very hard to see. In shades of browns and yellows and grays, morels make their brief appearance in the early spring, when most of the forest is still brown and yellow and gray. Along with their cryptic coloring, morels wrap themselves in wrinkles and folds that blend almost perfectly with the ridges and furls of

When and Where to Look

Morels begin emerging in the early spring, but the exact dates can vary from year to year. For the best luck, look towards the trees and wildflowers for clues on timing:

- ◆ Morels begin to appear about the same time that redbuds begin to bloom.
- ◆ Some insist that morel season is in full swing by the time the May apples have fully opened.
- ◆ When the dogwoods are done blooming, the morels are also done.
- ◆ Elevation matters a great deal, so look for clues near the same elevation that you will hunt for morels.

Morels grow just about anywhere, including the occasional lawn or roadside ditch. For the best luck, however, look for these clues:

- ◆ Morels often grow near mature tulip poplars, ash, cherries, sycamores or elms.
- ◆ Live and newly-dead elms appear to be especially lucrative.
- ◆ Moist areas are best.
- ◆ Old apple and pear orchards may be very productive, especially if the orchards are maintained organically.

dried leaves, twigs, and half-eaten nuts. I found dozens of walnut shells before I found my first morel, for example. For one glorious moment I would believe I'd found a morel, only to bend closer and pick up yet another walnut. Finally, morels are tiny. Most morels are about the size of an adult's thumb, more or less. Some can grow much larger, but these are uncommon.

But none of this should deter you. Morels may be hard to find, but they are absolutely worth the effort. These little wild mushrooms are incredible in the kitchen, whether sautéed simply in butter, folded into an omelet, or mixed with thyme and rice to create a savory risotto.

I'd never tasted a fresh morel before last spring, when dreams of sautéed morels inspired me to pull on my boots and hike into the woods. The early springtime forest can be a difficult place to travel. There are moments of sparkling beauty and welcoming warmth, but cold, gray, and damp days are much more common. I slid down mud-slicked hills and got caught in unexpected rain showers more than once. Those early—and fruitless—morel hunts generally left me wet and exhausted, but also vibrantly happy. Because, while the morels (I realized later) were still sleeping in the cold soil, the forest's wildflowers were springing to life. During those morel-less hikes, I found spring beauty, toothwort and hepatica in full bloom. I discovered a patch of bloodwort clinging to life in a ridge of leaf mold atop a boulder. I learned to identify orchids, and watched fern leaves unfurl into the timid rays of sunlight. And then, about the time the spicebush erupted into a wild haze of green and yellow, I began to find morels.

If you want to skip the cold, yet wildflower-rich, early hikes, wait for the redbuds to bloom. This is fantastic advice, which I completely ignored. I began watching the redbuds by late February, practically willing those buds to burst open. By the time the branches had turned deep purple with swollen but unopened buds, I was already trudging through the woods, in hot pursuit of a mushroom that was still dormant. Not until the redbuds burst forth into ecstatic displays of frothy pink did I find my first morel.

The advice is good advice: Wait for the redbuds to bloom. If you do insist on hitting the trail early—because you never know—take along a wildflower guide. Or, if you are a turkey hunter, combine the two activities. Morel season often overlaps with spring turkey season.

"You end up with a lot of turkey hunters who become morel hunters," explains Goins.

*It's a Zen thing.
Morel hunting is*



zen experience.

Morels, I've been told, prefer to grow among stands of mature tulip poplars on eastern-facing slopes. This may be so, but it's nothing I can confirm. Almost all of my family's land—twenty acres in total—slopes toward the east, and approximately half the trees are mature tulip poplars. According to the advice I'd been given, this was prime morel habitat. And so, I began my hunt with the wild belief that I would find the forest literally carpeted with morels. Twenty acres of morels.

This is not what I found. Rather than sweeping expanses of morels, I found small patches of the mushrooms far separated from one another. The tulip poplars appeared to have no say in the matter. Instead, I found morels beneath elms—both live and dead—near cherries, and wildly abundant in several groves of paw paws. In the shadow of one giant ash, I found a half-dozen enormous morels, each one bigger than the last and none smaller than my hand. And then, there was the one morel I spotted while driving along my road. There it was, growing happily in the hot sun, surrounded by gravel and dust. Not a tulip poplar to be seen.

None of this means that stands of tulip poplars are a bad place to look. They are simply not the *only* place to look. In addition to tulip poplars, ash, elms, and cherries, I was advised to look for morels in old apple orchards, beneath sycamore trees, and around aspen or maple. The best piece of advice was also the simplest: You will find morels where you expect to find them. Why? Because that is where you will look the hardest. So, if you enter the woods only expecting to find morels beneath tulip poplars and elms, you will probably miss the ones that have sprung up among the paw paws and beneath the ash trees.

If you still aren't finding morels, Goins offers this advice: "Slow down, sit down, and wipe that desperate look off your face. It's a Zen thing. Morel hunting is a Zen experience."

Wherever you look, be sure to carry the one essential piece of morel hunting equipment: a mesh bag or a loosely woven basket. Morels—like all mushrooms—spread by tiny airborne spores. Confine your harvest to a plastic or paper bag, and you will prevent those spores from hitting the forest floor and making new morels. Thus, it is essential morel-hunter-etiquette to use mesh bags or baskets, spreading morel spore wherever your foraging takes you. Some foragers also carry a long stick or walking staff for poking through the leaves and a small knife for harvesting the morels. I skipped the walking stick but did carry a small pocket knife, which I used to carefully slice through each morel's stem above the soil. If you prefer to work without a knife, the morels can be harvested by hand, but care should be taken to ensure that the underground growth is not disturbed. Like all mushrooms, the majority of the morel organism lives beneath the soil and should be left unharmed to ensure that morels will continue to grow in this spot for years to come.

Morels are a good mushroom for novice foragers, because they are so difficult to confuse with any other mushroom. Train your eyes to recognize the little mushrooms by spending some time studying photographs of morels. Or, set a store-bought dried morel in a realistic setting and practice *seeing* it. Better yet, team up with a friend and play "find the morel." The trick is to teach your eyes to recognize the vertical ridges and wrinkles of a healthy morel.

The only mushroom that looks remotely like a morel is the false morel.





Above, a true morel flourishes beneath an ash tree late in the season.

Below, cutleaf toothwort, *Cardamine concatenata*, blooms in Virginia woods during morel season.

©Cristina Santiestevan

These toxic look-alikes are generally a bit larger than true morels and have a rounder, more brain-like head. *The true test is the state of the stem: True morels have clean, hollow stems and heads while false morels are filled with a spongy mass of tissue.* Thus, if in doubt, simply slice your mushroom in half, from top to bottom.

Once you've confirmed that there are no false morels in your harvest, you can begin to think about eating these tasty mushrooms. While some will insist that morels should never be washed, I soaked most of my harvest in salt water, which helped remove any small bugs. After soaking for a few minutes, I would pat the morels dry with a towel and begin to cook them. I experimented with several recipes—a mushroom and wine sauce for steak, risotto, an omelet—but the best way to eat them was also the simplest: sautéed in butter, perhaps with a little dried thyme for seasoning. However you cook them, *you must cook them.* Morels can be mildly toxic if eaten raw and may cause severe nausea, cramping or worse. Cooked, though, morels are completely safe and absolutely delicious.

The morel season is unfortunately a short-lived affair and generally runs its course within a few weeks. You may extend your harvest time by venturing into higher or lower elevations, but nothing will extend the season beyond the first real heat of the year. By the end of May, the morels will be gone. If your morel experience is anything like mine, you will immediately begin thinking about the next season, promising yourself that, next time, you will wait until the redbuds bloom. Except, you won't. Impatience, hope and memories of sautéed morels will lure you into the forest too early. That's okay. Enjoy the wildflowers, listen for turkeys, and watch the forest wake up. Soon, the morels will be back. ☐

Cristina Santiestevan writes about wildlife and the environment from her home in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains.

Live to be an Old Mushroom Hunter

Many wild mushrooms are delicious, but others can be famously toxic. "This is not a hobby to take lightly," warns Amy, who believes morels are a very safe choice for novice foragers. There are many ways to learn about foraging for mushrooms and other wild edibles. Here are a few ideas to get started:

Join a club

Mycological Association of Washington
www.mawdc.org

Read some guidebooks

Be sure to choose a guide book with high-quality photos of North American mushrooms. Amy recommends the *National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms*.

Learn more online

- ◆ morelmania.com
- ◆ mushroomexpert.com
- ◆ morelmushroomhuntingclub.com



©Cristina Santiestevan



Huntley Meadows

by King Montgomery

Huntley Meadows in Fairfax County is a 1,500-acre forest, meadow, and central wetland park open to the public at no charge. An oasis in Hybla Valley amid the densely populated suburbs spanning Alexandria to Springfield, it offers a brief, invigorating escape from the concrete, asphalt, and gas fumes that all too often characterize Northern Virginia. Huntley Meadows offers wildlife and bird watching, a place to enjoy the outdoors, and a sense of

tranquility that I believe is its most distinguishing feature.

The list of plants and creatures found in the park is impressive: 200 plus species of birds, including shorebirds and waterfowl; almost 70 species of butterflies; 22 kinds of dragonflies and 8 types of damselflies; 34 mammal species; 30 varieties of reptiles and amphibians; 23 species of fish; and countless insects of all description. I always check my camera settings as I walk the trail from the Visitors Center.

The centerpiece of Huntley Mead-

ows is an expansive marsh—a wetland with many tendrils that pulse throughout a large portion of the property. Here, beavers maintain small dams that keep water in for much of the year while allowing their levels to fluctuate from very wet to almost dry, depending on weather conditions.

History

The land where Huntley Meadows now sits once was owned by Francis Mason, grandson of George Mason, the Revolutionary War patriot from

Virginia. During the American Civil War, the estate, like much of Northern Virginia, remained in Union control. In the winter of 1861, troops of the 3rd Michigan Infantry Regiment camped on the meadows and the nearby Huntley House served as their headquarters.

The U.S. government acquired the land in the 1940s, and it was used by the Bureau of Public Roads and, later, the Virginia National Guard. In 1970, the federal government declared the acreage surplus, and, under the Land-for-Parks Program, ceded it to Fairfax County in 1975. With purchase of 163 additional acres by the Fairfax County Parks Authority, the boundaries of Huntley Meadows Park were formed.

With that history, it is clear the park was not a pristine gem of wilderness, but with a little coddling, dedication by park personnel, and a large

volunteer base, Huntley Meadows Park has become a refuge for nature to reclaim and display its wares.

Fauna & Flora

It had been awhile since I visited the park, so it was a mild shock when I cleared the woods and stepped onto the boardwalk that courses the marsh. The inlet to the right, once filled with water, was instead home to reeds, cattails, and other grasses. Continuing along the wooden path, I could see the great marsh in the center of the park was much diminished. In recent years, beavers had not kept up with needed engineering tasks to sequester water and, coupled with a multi-year drought, the marsh spent much time almost dry.

Park naturalist Suzanne Malone reports the beavers are back now and hard at work. A wet fall and winter are keeping the wetlands at optimum



©Tommy Kirkland



conditions. But experience has shown that you can't count on beavers.

Permit reviews are currently pending that would allow construction to better control water levels in the park. That construction would create an earthen berm, a stormwater spillway, several wetland pools, and enhanced habitat in upland and lowland areas. Structures are designed to look as natural as possible, and while the construction timetable is not yet firm, the park remains a wonderful place to visit.

In fact, Huntley Meadows is one of the most unique avian environments in Northern Virginia, particularly for marsh birds. Ducks and geese, and various shorebirds—mostly great blue herons and white egrets—continue to work the area for the vegetation, insects, frogs, and fishes that fed them. Overhead, sightings of bald eagles and osprey are common. Red-wing blackbirds twitter in the cattails and a variety of birds, small and large, flit about.

As you walk the half-mile boardwalk, you're also apt to see tadpoles, frogs, snakes, muskrat, raccoons, white-tailed deer, and the occasional beaver. It is a great place to escape from the daily travails of city living; and, of course, a dose of nature always is good for the soul.

Huntley Meadows flaunts a colorful array of wildflowers from spring through fall. Some 320 species have been identified, from the common yellow dandelion to the elegant cardinal flower, a bright red rivaling Virginia's state bird. The flowers attract nectar-eating birds and insects, and beauty-loving visitors of all ages.

Many trees add their share of scent and color to the park, from the wispy pink flowers of the mimosa to the blossoming dogwoods.

Programs & Amenities

The Visitors Center off the Lockheed Blvd. entrance blends in tastefully with the park. Start your visit here by looking at the informative, interactive displays. Lectures, seminars, and photo shows are routinely offered in the classroom and auditorium; nature walks are conducted by a park naturalist or one of the volunteers. Wide, well-maintained paths and boardwalks also make much of the park wheelchair accessible.

The park offers volunteer positions and coordinates volunteer activities with the 400-member Friends of Huntley Meadows. The group dedicates their efforts to protecting and preserving the park, and educating the public about this unique ecological phenomenon.

Children's groups are particularly encouraged to visit, and various area schools bus young students to the park to enjoy the outdoors and learn while having fun. It is very encouraging to see kids wide-eyed with amazement at what nature has to offer, often for the first time. Sadly, today's many electronic diversions—televisions, computers, cell phones—occupy the body and precious time, but steal from the mind.

At Huntley Meadows Park there are no video games. There are no canoes or float tubes to rent, and there are no hot dog stands. Those who visit here find ample fascination in all that nature has to offer and move quietly to preserve the reverent hush that pervades this much-needed sanctuary.

King Montgomery is an outdoor/travel writer and photographer from Burke. He likes the fact that park traffic is limited to birds and animals and the people who appreciate them.



©King Montgomery

Park Information

- Huntley Meadows Park: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley; 703-768-2525. The Visitors Center is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day. Hours vary according to season. You may visit the park every day of the year from dawn to dark.
- Friends of Huntley Meadows: www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org, 703-768-2525. The Friends have a full program of volunteer and educational activities at the park.



Huntley Meadows Visitors Center

DOWN-TO-EARTH *Education*

story and photos
by Gail Brown



A career center in Dickenson County prepares students with 'real world' skills.

Hunters and others familiar with woodland quiet might try to identify two-legged or four-legged visitors on the nature trail behind the Dickenson County Career Center (DCCC) in Clinchco. With a massive mountain providing a backdrop to the trail on one side, and a thick cover of oak, maple, beech, yellow poplar, sycamore, and hickory blocking views from the other, visitors to the trail find themselves tucked away in another world. Accurately predicting what ventures between mountain and stream is left to those with keener senses—most of the time.

But not on S.M.A.R.T. Day! On S.M.A.R.T. Day the quiet gives way to squeals of laughter, shouted questions, bouncing feet, and echoed answers—all followed by more of the same. On this one day each October anyone in Dickenson County who happens by the school would tell you, "Oh, that's just the fourth graders doing science."

And while that's right, everyone's learning lots of other things at every corner of the campus, too. On S.M.A.R.T. Day students and teachers at the career center bring the county's fourth graders to campus for hands-on, exciting lessons in sci-

ence, math, art, reading, and technology. The goal is to help their young guests understand that each one of them is smart, can achieve what they set out to do, and can learn best when they use all of their senses, especially their sense of fun.



Students build (and sell!) a 3-bedroom home each year, and funds are applied to construction materials. Cooperation is the cornerstone of their success.



Carpentry students built this sign. Small Engines classes maintain the trail.

All this helps make S.M.A.R.T. DAY a success and the nature trail, still a work in progress, one of the most impressive initiatives of its kind in the state. That elusive "something more" that pushes any great enterprise over the top to superior can be teased out by listening to the students. Cody Winebarger states: "I really enjoyed the nature trail. I grew up in nature...hunting, playing, or just walking; either way...I love the nature trail. Working on it was tough, but in the end, it was worth it."

Once envisioned, there was never a doubt that the entire center would get behind the trail, a project that grew to include an outdoor classroom, concrete pathways, two



Nursing students help each other learn important skills.

bridges, tree identification signs, bird houses and feeders, and education stations. Each specialty contributed to the project. Drafting classes designed several benches and bridges. Welding classes built both bridges and gates; one, a 54-foot metal bridge across the stream and the other, a 17-foot bridge with flooring made of recycled material donated by Dickenson County Litter Control. Masonry classes built concrete platforms for the bridges and also built the outdoor classroom which was wired by the electricity classes. Carpentry built tree identification posts, birdhouses, feeders, and the trail entrance sign; they also built a picnic table for the outdoor classroom and benches for



Using tools correctly and safely is stressed.

"I really enjoyed working on the nature trail because of the natural beauty of the creek and forest."

Joseph Kirberg

the trail. Exploratory classes created posters and artwork for the entrance sign and raised money for the concrete sidewalk leading from the outdoor classroom to the basketball court. (Yes, the kids built all that, too!) Nursing students monitor the water at the stream.

While all of the buildings the students have worked on mean a great deal to them, the nature trail will always be a work in progress and, as such, continues to provide opportunities for new students to add their touch. Keidra Gulley offers: "I think kids like the nature trail a lot because everyone has the opportunity to work on it. We all got together and built a pretty good waterfall. At first it was sort of hard to get going, but finally we got the hang of it."

Joseph Kirberg adds, "I really enjoyed working on the nature trail because of the natural beauty of the creek and forest."

While learning to work as a team is a challenge for any group, at DCCC it became the cornerstone of their achievements. At the center, students arrive from three different area schools to attend morning or after-



Students taking Auto Service and Technology and Auto Collision and Repair can work on their own cars.

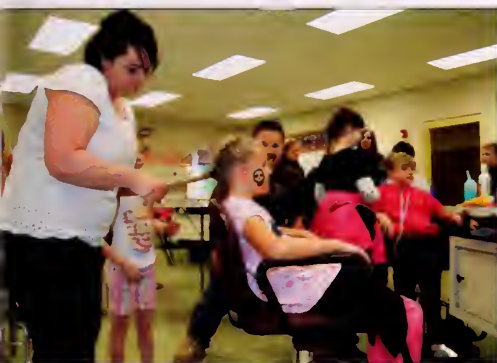
noon sessions. The fact that students take the majority of their classes in a specific skill area, yet see the big picture and scale up or down their contribution, indicates the magnitude of



You can see and hear nature all along the trail.



S.M.A.R.T. Day activities include learning to take care of the environment. At DCCC students reuse materials whenever possible.



Some S.M.A.R.T. Day activities are challenging. Some are unusual. All are fun!

their success. No doubt, team effort was one of the key factors in the center's ability to nail down the "Regional 2007 Creating Excellence Award for Career and Technical Education" for their greenhouse project. That project, which included the greenhouse and a classroom, is another prime example of how students from various disciplines work together to accomplish group goals. Today anyone wanting to help at any time can roll up their sleeves and join in the effort: there's always work to do to make things better, as each year more flowers and vegetables are added to the "let's try to grow this" list.

Across campus sits the largest building the students have designed and constructed: a 3700-square-foot, multi-activity Student and Community Center complete with bathrooms, kitchen, storage areas, and a stage. Available to both the school and community and valued at \$165,000, the building was used by over 1,000 people the first year it opened.

"It's fun to work on projects like the student center," states Leanna

Rasnake, "because we get to use the things we build." Before the center reached completion, individuals, businesses, and local and state agencies stepped forward to provide what might be needed in the way of additional funds and other support. For their efforts, DCCC was recognized once again by taking home the "Regional 2008 Creating Excellence Award for Career and Technical Education" and, in 2009, with the "Creating Excellence Award for Business Partnerships."

The Student and Community Center recently served as a gathering place for over 200 area educators discussing such topics as reforestation of the American chestnut. It was during work on this project that the desire to get more involved in stewardship efforts such as cleaning up the landfill and building the nature trail and outdoor classroom came to fruition. It's clear that at DCCC "if you want to see the forest for the trees," you need to take a step closer, not back, and you need to follow the concrete walks as well as the mulched trail. All will lead you to examples of what the staff, students,

and administration can accomplish by working together on projects that allow them to build on their talents and interests.

The fact that many DCCC students achieve success at the district, state, and even national levels in Skills-USA competitions speaks well for the education students receive at the center. Most importantly, the students at DCCC believe the skills and knowledge they are working toward will lead to future employment and independence.

"The career center is great if you like hands-on learning," states student Jodi Boyd.

Mancel Powers explains that he chose electricity class "because it is hands-on experience and electricians get good pay."

Courtney Bell agrees, saying, "I think DCCC is a great place to learn a skill."

The students are right: they are learning important skills. If you look carefully, you can't help but notice they are learning so much more. □

Gail Brown is a retired teacher and school administrator.



As a Virginia Naturally School, DCCC students work hard to educate others about good stewardship practices.

AIN'T NO FISH IN THAT CREEK

by Jason Hallacher

It's spring. There is a chill in the air, and I shiver with anticipation over the day of fishing ahead. The water is dark with freshly stocked trout. I grip my fishing pole tightly, patiently waiting for first light. I'm 10 years old and this is as good as it gets. Countless trips like these with my dad, elbow to elbow with other anglers, are burned into my memory, shaping me into the outdoorsman I am today.

Despite these powerful memories of visiting popular, local fishing holes, I also remember growing tired of tangled lines and occasional arguments over errant casts. Soon enough, I started to wander from highly populated areas to find my own secret fishing spots. By avoiding the crowds, I not only caught fish but learned that you don't have to see the fish to catch the fish.

I take these lessons into consideration now that it is my job to help stock trout. As an agency, our Department works hard to provide a great recreational experience for anyone who chooses to pick up a fishing pole. Since I started working here, however, I've been hearing recurring comments from trout anglers: "If I can't get to the creek when the stocking truck shows up, there's no sense in fishing," or just as likely, "This stream's all fished out."



Dwight Dyke

Despite these sentiments, I was convinced there were plenty of fish to catch based on past sampling experiences. However, without a properly designed study there was no way to know how long the trout actually remained after a stocking took place.

In the fall of 2007, we set out to educate ourselves and the anglers of the commonwealth about stocked trout retention, to answer that nagging question. To find out, we designed a simple study on a Category B stocked trout stream (category determines stocking frequency). We knew that fishing pressure varied between streams, so we chose a stream with excellent access. To determine how long the trout remain in the stream after a stocking, we sampled three, 100-meter sections of the stream on the 3rd, 7th, and 14th day after the stocking took place. Stream sampling involves the use of specialized, electro fishing equipment, which sends an electric current through the water and temporarily stuns the fish, allowing biologists to easily capture them. By doing this, we can estimate how many fish might occupy a given stretch of waterway.

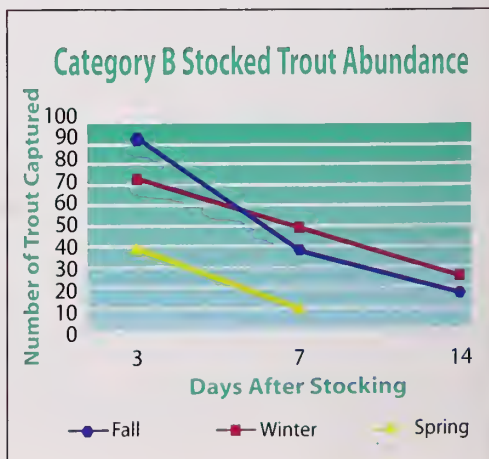
During the first sample I didn't know what to expect. I assumed that we would capture quite a few fish. After acclimating to their new surroundings, though, the trout found plenty of places to hide. But soon after we started electro shocking,

trout began floating out of all sorts of underwater nooks and crannies—confirming what I'd learned as a boy; that just because you can't see them doesn't mean they aren't there.

We found that trout are removed or harvested at a relatively consistent rate over time, and that this is similar across the seasons. The bottom line: If you fish within a two-week period after a stocking takes place, you have an excellent opportunity to catch your limit of trout. Further research on Category A and Category C streams yielded similar results.

So, find a free day to hit one of the stocked trout waters nearby. More importantly, take a kid fishing and enjoy Virginia's great outdoors together! □

Jason Hallacher is a senior fisheries technician with the Department.





2010 Outdoor Calendar of Events

Unless otherwise noted, for current information and registration on workshops go to the "Upcoming Events" page on our website at www.HuntFishVA.com or call 804-367-7800.

April 3: Trout Heritage Day.

April 3: Kids Fishing Heritage Day, Graves Mountain Lodge. For more information call (540) 923-4231.

April 3: Youth Spring Turkey Hunt Day. For ages 15 and younger.

April 10: Spring turkey season opens.

April 15, 17, 22, 24, & 27: *An Introduction to Flower Photography* and **April 29, May 1, 6, 8, & 11:** *Flash Clinic: How to Use our Camera's Flash*, both with Lynda Richardson at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond. Go to www.lewisginter.org and look under Adult Education for classes, or call (804) 262-9887, x322.

April 17–18: 10th annual Virginia Fly Fishing Festival, Waynesboro; www.vaflyfishingfestival.org.

April 24: Youth Shooting and Adult Sporting Clay Tournament, Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, Shady Grove Sporting Clays, Remington. For registration and information: <http://shady-grove.com> or (703) 232-3572.

May 7–9: Great Dismal Swamp Birding Festival, Suffolk; www.fws.gov/northeast/greatdismalswamp/.

May 8: International Migratory Bird Celebration, Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, www.chincoteaguechamber.com/

May 14–16: *Becoming an Outdoors-Woman®*, Graves Mountain Lodge. Ages 18 and up.

May 15: Spring turkey season closes.

May 21–23: Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Festival, Pembroke; www.mountainlakebirding.com.

May 22–28: National Safe Boating Week. ☐



by Beth Hester

Turkey Calls and Calling: A Guide to Improving Your Turkey-Talking Skills

by Steve Hickoff
2009
Stackpole Books
www.stackpolebooks.com
717-796-0411

"When you successfully converse with a spring gobbler, or autumn or winter wild turkey, you've crossed over into a meaningful realm unrivaled in the hunting tradition. Using manmade calls to talk with a wild turkey in the bird's own language, in order to lure that quarry into your setup position is pretty amazing stuff."

—Steve Hickoff

Let's talk turkey. The language spoken by one of our country's most tasty birds is diverse, and nuanced, with seasonal and situational variations thrown in just to make things more interesting. Turkey poults begin to make sounds while still inside their eggs, and brood hens employ a special 'yelp' that encourages the chicks to hatch and helps to cement the linguistic bond.

When you become familiar with the ways in which turkey vocalizations are combined with the myriad other noises they make, the challenge is on to lure the birds within range with your own convincing imitations.

Added to the enjoyment is the vast range of manmade devices used to help call in the birds. Friction calls, mouth diaphragms, wing-bone, and trumpet calls are satisfying to master and fun to collect. Several styles of calls can also be crafted by the hunter, making their use in the field even more rewarding.

Whether you are a beginning turkey hunter or are simply looking to advance your calling repertoire, Steve Hickoff's new guide is perfect. Think of this volume as the hunting equivalent of a Berlitz® guide; by reading it and practicing the recommended techniques and tactics, you'll be better prepared to meet our wary, feathered friends on their own turf.

Steve, who is a regular contributor to *Outdoor Life* magazine, covers every aspect of turkey calling; a brief history of the calling tradition, learning turkey vocabulary, types of calls and their use, situational strategies, and turkey hunting resources. The book is liberally illustrated with colorful photographs and helpful diagrams which bring the text to life, and Hickoff thoughtfully includes a well-chosen bibliography for readers who want to further explore turkey hunting and turkey lore. ☐

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Outdoor Report

Managing and Conserving
Our Wildlife and Natural Resources

For a **free email subscription**, visit our website at www.HuntFishVA.com. Click on the **Outdoor Report** link and simply fill in the required information.

Trees Teach Kids with Dominion's Project Plant It! Program

This spring, nature's tallest denizens will instruct almost 30,000 third graders across the commonwealth about the important role of trees in the ecosystem, with some help from Project Plant It!—an environmental education program developed by Dominion Virginia Power. During the week of Arbor Day, each participating student receives a tree seedling from Dominion.

Now in its fourth year, Project Plant It! has more than quadrupled in size and scope. The program features a comprehensive teacher kit, mailed early in 2010, packed with creative instructional tools such as lesson plans, posters, a DVD, certificates, stickers, and more. All teaching materials align with Virginia Standards of Learning for the third-grade core curriculum subjects of science, math, language arts, and social studies.

A fun and interactive website, www.ProjectPlantIt.com is filled with games, reading lists, family activities, and even videos narrated by Dominion foresters. The tree seedlings are shipped to schools in late April, in plenty of time for distribution to students on Arbor Day (April 30) so that kids can make a personal contribution to their local environment.

Many school systems throughout Virginia are enrolled in Project Plant It!, but even teachers in outlying areas can easily participate by downloading all of the lesson plans from the website. Also, these teachers can order up to 30 tree seedlings online while supplies last.

Experts from the Virginia Department of Forestry estimate that 75 acres of new forestland would be created if all 30,000 seedlings are planted. □

This report was contributed by Sara Hunt for Dominion Virginia Power.



Roanoke River Renaissance

The second annual Roanoke River Renaissance will be held Saturday, May 15, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Wasena Park in Roanoke. Ken Ingram, organizer for the event put on by the Roanoke Valley Chapter of the Float Fishermen of Virginia (RV-FFV), said the inaugural affair is held to celebrate the removal of the dam at Wasena Park and to promote continuing efforts to extend a greenway along the urban waterway.

Ingram relates that ongoing goals include increasing awareness of the paddling, fishing, birding, biking, and wildlife watching opportunities that exist within the stream's urban corridor through Salem and Roanoke. Events planned include seminars on river safety (involving such topics as proper equipment and river rescue tips) and outdoor cooking and fishing instruction. Outdoor recreation vendors will also be present.

This float will be from Salem Rotary Park on Route 419 to Wasena Park in downtown Roanoke. The RV-FFV will provide shuttles and operate a hospitality booth at Wasena.

For more information, go to: www.floatfishermen.org/rvc/. □

This report was contributed by Bruce Ingram.

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Outdoor Kids

You ought to be in pictures!

Do you have some great photos of your kids in the outdoors, hunting or fishing or wildlife watching?

If so, consider sharing your best one with the readers of Virginia Wildlife. We will showcase your photograph, along with a caption, in an upcoming issue.

Please send to:

Virginia Wildlife Magazine

ATTN: Editor

P.O. Box 11104

Richmond, VA 23230-1104

Please include a brief description of the photograph, along with a daytime phone number if we have any questions, and a SASE if you want your print or CD returned to you.



A number of you have emailed my website commenting on some of the advice I've given about dog training and puppy raising. Your emails have been both flattering and enlightening for two reasons: One, it appears most of you have felt my advice has been pretty good; and two, you humans generally accept whatever you feel is good advice no matter *where* it comes from—even a dog!

I also get the feeling there must be some hunting and fishing "widows" out there and that a dog is not just *man's* best friend... because a *majority* of the emails have come from *women*!

I thought it would be a good training process if I shared some of these emails with you in order to improve not only dog and human interaction, but also to help minimize the time you humans spend in the proverbial "doghouse."

Dear Luke,
I was having a conversation with my new boyfriend the other night while my Pomeranian was seated next to us. During the conversation, there was a word that I did not want my dog to recognize so I spelled it. My boyfriend thought it rather odd that I would spell a word in front of a dog. Am I going crazy thinking that a dog will not understand what I say if I spell the word?

Nancy M., Norfolk

Dear Nancy,
Dogs certainly do understand certain words and commands. Depending on the dog and how much time you have spent with it in training or, in your case, conversation, a dog will

develop a surprising vocabulary. If you don't want your dog to understand what you are saying, try learning an obscure foreign language because Pomeranians are good spellers. However, spelling in front of your boyfriend may be good practice for him if you are thinking of making him your husband. I have heard many wives say to each other, "*He just didn't get it until I spelled it out for him!*"

Dear Luke,
My husband, who is retired, just fell out of his tree stand while deer hunting and broke a leg and two ribs. It's lucky the old fool didn't kill himself! Now he is hanging around the house all day in a foul mood because he cannot go hunting. What do you recommend to keep him occupied and out of my hair?

Alice B., Chesterfield

Dear Alice,
I don't know what it is about humans climbing trees to shoot a deer. You would think that a man in his 60s would know that deer don't live in trees! Squirrels do, but to me they are hardly worth the effort of tree climbing. My suggestion is to get him a book by some great outdoor writers—like Nash Buckingham, Robert Ruark, Havilah Babcock (a native Virginian), or Gene Hill. Try to keep him in the books and out of trees.

Dear Luke,
Please help us with this dilemma! Our young daughter, for some strange reason, has gotten this desire to go hunting. We have encour-

aged her to be more like her two older brothers who have just started ballet lessons. She insists however, on getting an English setter puppy and training it so the two of them can—of all things—go grouse hunting. You see our problem. What can we do???

Mr. & Mrs. H., Clifton

Dear Mr. & Mrs. H,
I see your problem clearly, but I am afraid I will not be able to help your sons as quickly as you would like. My instructional ballet DVD will not be out for another six months and it is for very advanced students in this form of dance.

Hopefully, in some small way, by sharing these letters I can help you tackle some of life's obstacles. Just like some of my fellow Labradors who are Seeing Eye Dogs, I am looking out for you! □

Keep a leg up,
Luke

Luke is a black Labrador retriever who spends his spare time hunting up good stories with best friend Clarke C. Jones. You can contact Luke and Clarke at www.clarkecjones.com.



March
2010
Photo
Issue

Check out the photo contest winners in the March issue!

To get your copy send check for \$4.00 payable to Treasurer of Virginia, requesting March 2010 issue, to:

Virginia Wildlife
P.O. Box 11104
Richmond, VA 23230

On The Water

by Tom Guess



Virginia Celebrates 50 Years of Safe Boating

With a long winter behind us, April presents an ideal time to inspect your lifejackets and brush up on your boating safety knowledge *before* you head out on the water.

Have you ever asked yourself why the Department is charged with boating and boating safety? Chapter 500 of the 1960 Virginia Acts of General Assembly was "An act to require and provide for the safe operation of certain motorboats on the waters of this State over which the State now has or hereafter obtains jurisdiction." This act marked the beginning of the recreation boating program in the commonwealth. It established our numbering requirement, safety equipment carriage requirements, boating under the influence response, and authority for the "Commission" of Game and Inland Fisheries to make rules and regulations in connection with the safe and reasonable operation of vessels on waters within the state's territorial limits.

Since 1960 the Department has witnessed a number of subsequent, boating milestones, including watercraft titling in 1981; watercraft dealer licensing in 1988; implied consent and .10 Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) for Boating Under the Influence (BUI) in 1989; Personal Watercraft (PWC) statutes in 1991; and progressively stricter laws for operating both personal watercraft and larger recreational boats—including safety education compliance in 2007.

Many of Virginia's boating laws and regulations apply in concert with federal laws or regulations and mirror national enforcement and boating education trends. In support of our mission statement, the Department provides boat titling and registration, boating access through our statewide public boat ramps and facilities, boating education, boating law enforcement, and boat accident investigation and reporting.

This summer we enter our second year of the phased-in schedule of compliance for boating safety education. On July 1, 2010 all operators of Personal Watercraft (PWC), more commonly referred to as "jet skis," will be required to complete a boating safety course approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and accepted by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. There are several ways you can meet this requirement: 1) If you have ever

taken a boating safety course given by the USCG Auxiliary, the U.S. Power Squadrons, Virginia, or another state; 2) If you are licensed or have been licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard to operate a vessel (Master, Captain, or Mate); or 3) If you are a licensed commercial fisherman and your license is not expired.

If you meet the requirement through one of the means mentioned or you simply would like one, you may want to consider our optional Lifetime Boater's card—a waterproof wallet card that shows you have met the requirement. The card is available for \$10, and the application may be printed from our website.

You can get more information on boating and boating safety education in Virginia by visiting our website: www.dgif.virginia.gov/boating/. □

Tom Guess, U. S. Coast Guard (Ret.), serves as a statewide coordinator for the Boating Safety Education Program at the DGIF.

REMEMBER:

- ▲ **Be Responsible—don't operate your boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs**
- ▲ **Be Safe—take a boating safety course and always wear your lifejacket**
- ▲ **Have Fun—go out there for what boating is meant for...fun!**





by Ken and Maria Perrotte

Dining In

Baked Stuffed Shells

This stuffed shells recipe is one that has been adapted over many years. It's also one that had largely been forgotten in our dinner repertoire. In those early years before we began butchering our own deer and using most of the venison we ground for more exotic things such as jerky and sausage, ground venison was a standby in preparing meals that were both economical and tasty.

Carefully trimmed meat from the neck, flanks, hocks, and front shoulders of a deer makes for excellent ground venison. This simple, flavorful Italian-style dish is a superb way to get the most out of these cuts.

Ingredients

- 16-18 jumbo pasta shells (about $\frac{1}{2}$ of a 12 ounce box—we usually cook a few extras since a couple always seem to tear)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 chopped garlic cloves
- 1 pound ground venison
- Salt and pepper to taste
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup bread crumbs
- 3 tablespoons parsley
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasonings
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 slightly beaten egg
- 15-18 ounces favorite tomato or marinara sauce (we usually add garlic and white pepper to commercial sauces)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry red wine
- 2 tablespoons water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded parmesan cheese

Cooking

Preheat oven to 375°. Cook pasta according to directions for al dente, or just until tender. It is critical to not overcook since the shells will continue to cook while baking. Drain and set aside. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat and brown onion, garlic, and ground meat. Remove from heat and mix in next six ingredients. Set aside.

Stir together tomato sauce, wine, and water. Taste the mixture and amp up the spices if desired. Coat the bottom of a 9x13-inch baking pan with about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the sauce. Stuff each shell with about $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of meat mixture and arrange in a baking dish. Spoon remaining sauce over shells and

sprinkle with parmesan cheese. Bake at 375° uncovered for about 25 minutes or until bubbly. Makes four to five very generous portions.

This recipe is easy to prepare for large groups and can be made ahead of time to the point of assembling and baking. Or bake, then refrigerate and enjoy as leftovers.

As with traditional pasta dishes, serve with salad and garlic bread, using good Italian bread. Full-bodied red wine like good Chianti, an Argentinean Malbec, or a nice Italian Sangiovese will enhance the flavors.

Side Dish - Antipasto

A good antipasto can easily be a meal all by itself. On a recent trip to Australia, we were fortunate to visit the Smelly Cheese Shop in the Hunter Valley wine region. A combination platter and a few added goodies made it one of the best we've eaten. Of course, outstanding wine and scenery didn't hurt. A smaller serving makes an excellent accompaniment to the stuffed shells. Here are recommendations for re-creating that Aussie experience.

Ingredients

- Assorted lettuces
- Fresh spinach
- Grape or cherry tomato halves
- Cucumber, thinly sliced
- Red onion, thinly sliced
- Grilled, roasted or fresh peppers (sweet and spicy varieties are okay)
- Roasted eggplant or zucchini
- Assorted olives
- Slices of 2 or 3 cheeses (we like marinated mozzarella, sharp cheddar, Jarlesburg, or Camembert)
- Prosciutto and salami, thinly sliced
- Dolmades
- Pinch of Italian seasonings or Herbs de Provence
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive oil

Preparation

On a serving platter, arrange the lettuce and spinach. Top with remaining ingredients and drizzle with a nice olive oil. Enjoy with a good French baguette or Italian bread dipped in some olive oil with seasonings and fresh chopped garlic. □

Photo Tips

by Lynda Richardson

Just Say "No" to Automatic - Part 1

Many photographers start using their digital cameras by setting them on automatic mode and firing away with the hope of getting great pictures. Unfortunately, this doesn't always work and many are dissatisfied with the end results. By setting a camera on automatic, you lose total artistic control over how your photographs will look. The camera is making all of the decisions for you.

Well, I don't necessarily believe a camera shares my artistic vision. It is a technical wonder but it certainly doesn't have a creative bone in its plastic body! My guess as to why the automatic setting is so popular is that photographers really don't know what they're missing by using it. They are not happy but don't know why.

Taking your camera off of automatic is not as hard as it seems, because there are really only three basic things you need to consider when making great exposures. First, you need to decide on your ISO; then, either the aperture or shutter speed to use. (We'll talk about aperture in May and shutter speed in June.)

Let's first look at ISO. ISO stands for "International Organization for Standardization," but what it represents to digital photographers is the light sensitivity of a camera's image sensor. The higher the ISO number, the more sensitivity the sensor has to light. The lower the ISO number, the less sensitivity. A high ISO, like 1600, allows you to photograph in low light situations such as night concerts, dark overcast days, or just after sunset. A low ISO, like 100, allows you to shoot on bright, sunny days.

So why wouldn't you just select a high ISO and shoot it all the time? Because high ISOs, starting with 400, also mean that you can experience "noise" in the shadow areas of your pictures. For film shooters this is sim-

ilar to what is known as "grain." Although you can purchase noise reduction software programs, these programs really just smooth out the noise, making details in your photographs less sharp.

When you go out to take pictures, the first thing you should do is set the ISO for the amount of light in which you will be working. If you don't know where your ISO is, grab

your camera manual and find out! Once you have selected your ISO, your next job will be to decide whether the aperture or shutter speed setting is most important to the photographs you are getting ready to shoot.

In the next *Photo Tips* column we will continue our discussion with aperture settings. Until then, Happy Shooting! □



It was a slightly overcast day so I chose to set my ISO slightly higher, to 200, to capture this snowy egret from a blind. © Lynda Richardson

You are invited to submit one to five of your best photographs to "Image of the Month," Virginia Wildlife Magazine, P.O. Box 11104, 4010 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23230-1104. Send original slides, super high-quality prints, or high-res jpeg, tiff, or raw files on a disk and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or other shipping method for return. Also, please include any pertinent information regarding how and where you captured the image and what camera and settings you used, along with your phone number. We look forward to seeing and sharing your work with our readers.

Image of the Month



Congratulations to Stewart Moson of Broadway for his lovely photograph of a Cecropia moth taken last April. Stewart reports that he found a cocoon several months earlier, took it home, and it hatched in his kitchen. (Oops!) After the photo session, he released the moth. Canon EOS Digital Rebel XT, Canon 60mm macro lens, ISO 800, 1/200th, f2.8, plus flash. What a stunning moth and beautiful picture!

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE OUTDOOR CATALOG



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Our 2009 Collector's knife has once again been customized by Buck Knives and features a wild turkey in full strut. The elegant, solid cherry box features a forest scene. Knives and boxes, made in USA.

Item # VW-409 \$85.00 each (plus \$7.25 S&H)



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Habitat at Home

Check out this 2009 DVD that features several types of home habitat gardens and interviews with the homeowners who created them.

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2010 Kids'n Fishing Photo Contest

Big Prize Packages!

Generous prizes, provided by Green Top Sporting Goods and Shakespeare, will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each age category.



- ◆ Children in the picture must fall into one of the following age categories when the picture is taken: 1-5 or 6-10.
- ◆ Photos should not be more than one year old and must be taken in Virginia. Only one photo submission per child.
- ◆ Submit photo on photograph quality paper. No CD's accepted. Photos should not exceed 4" X 6".
- ◆ Attach a piece of paper to back of photo and include: name, age, address, phone number, and fishing location. Please do not write on the back of the photographs.
- ◆ Children in a boat must be wearing a lifejacket, properly buckled or zipped.
- ◆ A Contest Release Form (PDF) must be submitted along with the photograph.
Go to www.HuntFishVa.com for release form and complete contest details.
- ◆ Photos must be postmarked on or before June 19, 2010.
- ◆ Send entry to 2010 Kids'n Fishing Photo Contest, VDGI, P.O.Box 11104, Richmond, VA 23230-1104.
- ◆ Judging will take place in July and winners will be posted on the DGIF website.